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Africa
1896-1920

List of novelties,

1896

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Great Extension of Business.

FROM THE 1ST JULY MY BUSINESS WILL BE CONDUCTED AS G. H. WILKINSON & Co.

The improved aspect of political and commercial affairs in South Africa has determined me to extend the Nursery business.

I have now got the right men in the right places, many of whom have been with me nearly 20 years, and one, who has perhaps planted more trees with his own hands than any other man in South Africa, and who came to me early in 1874, is about to return to me.

For the past four years the Cape Colony has had almost a monopoly of the Transvaal Nursery trade, in consequence of having had railway communication.

Natal will again come to the front now that it is connected with the other South African Railways.

The depression in the Nursery trade in Natal has caused me to accumulate an immense Stock of the best varieties of Fruit Trees, Roses, and other Shrubs and Trees. Amongst them are Apple, Apricot, Pear, and Citrus Trees, from three to five years old, many of which have borne fruit, and they are being sold at remarkably low prices.

It is amusing to read in the catalogues of Cape Nurserymen descriptions of Fruit Trees, as novelties at high prices, which were bearing fruit in Natal long before the Cape Colony was allowed to import trees.

While it will continue to be my principle never to offer to sell at lower prices than my competitors in order to attract their customers, yet I will never be beaten in prices by them, as I consider it a business axiom that a man should not buy from his best friend if he could get a similar article of equal quality at a lower price elsewhere.

Those who wish to import Trees or Seeds, even in the smallest quantities, will do well to send their orders through me, as no commission will be charged if they send the approximate cost with the order. They will get their Plants and Seeds cheaper than if they ordered direct, as I made most favourable arrangements with the representatives of those world-renowned seedsman, Messrs. Sutton & Sons, of Reading, on their recent visit to Natal.

I have made equally favourable arrangements with houses of the highest standing in Europe, America, including the West Indies, Asia, including Japan, and Australia, in fact in every place where Seedsmen and Nurserymen are to be found.

My customers say they have never before had such good Seeds as those I have imported this year, whether Flower, Farm, Vegetable, or Tree Seeds, and there is a much larger stock than usual.

The Transvaal Nurserymen who have recently visited the Nursery have expressed astonishment at the immense stock.

I have some Fruit Trees imported for my own planting during the past five years, but as the ground is required for nursery stock, I am selling them at far below their value.

Many people have commenced to plant deciduous trees in the autumn instead of late in spring as formerly, and consequently the stock of many varieties is already exhausted, especially of yearlings, but there are plenty of Orange and Lemon Trees, Pears, and Roses, small enough to be sent by post.

Amongst other novelties are the Keiffer Pear, Kelsey's Japan Plum, and Pecan-nut Trees.

KEIFFER PEAR.—The parent tree, sent from the United States of America in 1888, has not yet blossomed, but I have raised trees from it which have blossomed the year after they were grafted, and they have held their fruit; therefore it is no longer true that "He who plants pears plants for his heirs."

I have one-year-old trees at 30s. per dozen, and two-year-old trees at 40s. per dozen.

S. Africa

KELSEY'S JAPAN PLUM.—This variety enabled me to obtain the First Prize for Plums at the Maritzburg Horticultural Show in January, 1895. It is larger than the Greengage, and equal to it in flavour. Trees which have borne fruit are 7s. 6d. each, and others of equal age are 5s. each. Those budded in 1894 are 30s. per dozen. They have been sent away this season in hundreds, and there are a few left.

Fruit up to nine inches in circumference, heart shaped; greenish yellow, overspread with reddish, purple, and blue bloom; flesh very solid, yellow, rich and juicy, and with excellent flavour; pit very small, adhering slightly to the flesh. Most valuable for canning and evaporating. Produces about 20 lbs. of dried to 100 lbs. of fresh fruit. Many trees three years' old have produced half-a-bushel of fruit. Six-year-old trees have produced 3 bushels each. Trees have been laden with fruit when other varieties which bloomed later had the bloom destroyed with frost. This recommends it for cold districts. I expect it will fruit on the coast of Natal, a most unusual thing for plums.

The fruit possesses remarkable shipping properties. Shipments made from Georgia, U.S., to France kept sound for more than a month after arrival.

PECAN TREE.—For a description of this tree I refer my customers to page 68 of the work on Tree Planting by Mr. Caesar C. Hengel, Conservator of Forests, Transkeian Territories, a book which ought to be in the hands of every tree-planter in South Africa. I have requested Mr. Henkel to supply me with a number of his books, so that I can sell them to my customers. It was only last week I became aware that such a book existed.

The Pecan produces fruit superior in flavour and money value to the Walnut. I have kept the fruit six months, and it has tasted as if newly gathered, which is not the case with the Walnut. In America seedling trees usually bear fruit when seven years old. It is admirably adapted for this Colony. The Hon. G. M. Sutton, our Colonial Treasurer, has trees which have fruited. This tree should be planted by hundreds of acres, because the fruit can be exported to the enrichment of the growers.

Young trees 25s. per dozen, post free. Single trees 2s. 6d. each, postage extra.

PERSIAN PURPLE-LEAVED PLUM retains its leaves until mid-winter. It is cultivated as an ornamental tree, and produces fruit, which although of only second quality for dessert, is valuable for cooking. There are a few trees which have borne two crops of fruit, each established in a separate box weighing about 120 lbs. Price 7s. 6d. each, free on rail in Maritzburg.

SEED POTATOES.—I have been importing these from England since 1875, and have a reputation for them far beyond that of any other firm in South Africa. Those who wish to run the risk of the voyage, and to plant early, should send me their orders not later than the first week in August, as the first shipments have usually left England at the end of September, and have been in customers' hands early in November, when Colonial Seed Potatoes have not hitherto been obtainable.

Shipments from England continue until January. Hitherto I have always had English Seed Potatoes in Stock from November to February inclusive, which have been sold at a moderate advance on cost to cover the risk of damage during the voyage.

INDIGENOUS BULBS, PLANTS, AND SEEDS.—Special attention will be devoted to these when there is sufficient inducement to collect them.

YOUNG TIMBER TREES GROWN TO ORDER as cheaply as they can be obtained elsewhere in South Africa.

Contracts to supply and plant trees are also undertaken on terms to be ascertained on application to

G H. WILKINSON,

194, Commercial Road, and Town Bush Valley Nursery,

MARITZBURG.

30th JUNE, 1896.

